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SUBJECT: SOUTHERN SUDANESE CONCERNED ABOUT CHINESE BUSINESS
INTERESTS

¶1. (SBU) Summary: On Friday, January 11, CG Datta paid a courtesy call on George Justin Achor, Undersecretary in the Ministry of Presidential Affairs. Their one-hour discussion covered a wide range of topics, including the upcoming CPA celebrations in Wau, the LRA, the state of the CPA, the need for American business to come to Juba, and the threat that Chinese business interests present to Africa. End summary.

¶2. (SBU) Achor is a busy man these days, having been tasked by the GoSS with the organization of the CPA celebrations the GoSS is holding in Wau starting on January 13 and running for four days. Festivities include, among other things, sporting events, theater presentations, dancers and a host of speeches to include a major address by Vice President Kiir and nearly everyone else of importance in the GoSS. Although CPA celebrations were held in Khartoum on the ninth, the GoSS obviously intends for this to be their major event to recognize the anniversary of the signing. Most officials in Juba will empty out on the 14th to be in Wau for Kiir's speech, including most of the diplomatic community, which is being flown to Wau by the GoSS for the occasion.

¶3. (SBU) Achor went on to describe his recent work on the LRA peace talks, which he described as "going well." When the CG asked Achor if he thought Kone had killed his deputy Vincent Otti, he answered in the affirmative. The reason, he believed, was that Otti wanted peace at any price, and was even willing to stand trial later if that is what it took to make peace. Kone would have none of it, Achor thought, and was paranoid enough about Otti's intentions to murder him. Asked if he thought Kone was insane, Achor allowed that on the occasions when he has met him, sometimes he's logical, and sometimes he is just "different." Asked if Kone could be trusted to keep the peace if one is made, Achor said only if the LRA forces are integrated into the Ugandan army. That would take his men away from his control, and Kone would then have no choice in the matter. Asked about holding Kone accountable for his crimes, Achor responded that this issue is best left to determine at a later time. Discussions on this issue now would only serve to harden Kone against peace and prolong the suffering of the people in the region.

¶4. (SBU) Asked about the status of the CPA, Achor responded that it is in a fragile state, especially with the fighting around the Kiir river. He speculated, however, that Bashir might not be behind the trouble. In his view, Bashir is not in total control of his intelligence service. There are, he thought, Islamic hardliners in that organization who are running rogue operations without authorization, and that includes supplying arms to border groups to stir up trouble. However, he was not particularly worried by the violence because he believed the SPLA was more than a match for the attacking forces.

¶5. (SBU) Achor then went on to make an appeal for American business

investment in the south. He said he had been to Germany and India to warm receptions, and that in return both German and Indian businessmen had come to Juba. He would, he said, like to send a delegation of GoSS leaders to the US on a trip to explore developing new business contacts and relationships.

¶6. (SBU) At this point Achor became very serious, and said to the CG that he wanted American businessmen in Juba because he was very worried about the Chinese. "They come to Africa and they take but they don't give anything back. I don't trust them, and I don't want them here. What they want is to turn Africa into a new Chinese colony." Bring in American businessmen, he said, so we have an alternative. He was especially emphatic that he wanted American business interests to develop any new oil fields in the south of Sudan, not Chinese.

¶7. (SBU) Comment: As we find with nearly all our southern Sudanese contacts, Americans are viewed with great hope and anticipation in the South. We will pursue an International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) for GoSS and local business interests to tour the United States for two to three weeks to open the door to new business linkages and to begin a dialogue. The south is crying out for a partnership with American businessmen, and this is a win/win opportunity we should not miss.

FERNANDEZ